



Forming lives ready to face the future

FAMILY PRAYER SHEET

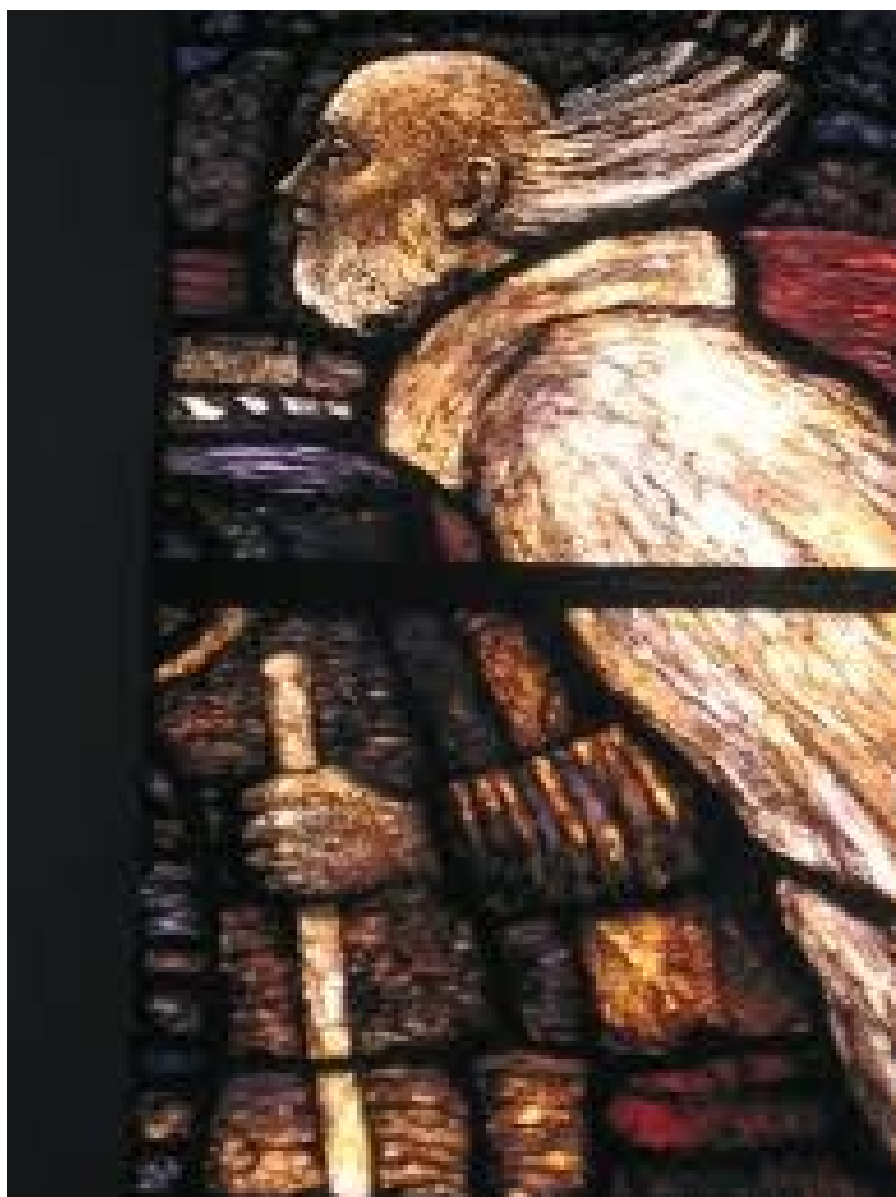
Ascension and 7th Week of Easter

Dear NPCAT Families

This prayer sheet aims to help families pray together now that we cannot go to Mass, particularly over this celebration of Easter. We hope that you will be able to use the activities to help our children and adults grow in faith at this time. We have tried to include activities that use resources that you might already have at home. If you don't have access to all of these resources, we hope that the activities give you inspiration to do something to explore the gospel and themes.

God Bless.

Angela O'Brien, Lead Lay Chaplain



Reading the Gospel from the Ascension Day Mass

A reading from the Gospel according to Gospel Matthew 28:16-20

The eleven disciples set out for Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had arranged to meet them. When they saw him they fell down before him, though some hesitated. Jesus came up and spoke to them. He said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you. And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.'

Alternatives for Younger Children

A short explanation of Ascension using lego to explain the feast and the story:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nnRJa4cZQIE>

In song: Song to help remember a key message from this bible passage:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sPvSLXzNIBM>

Reflection

Here Jesus gives his disciples a mission, they are sent out to help people come to know God through sharing Jesus' teachings. They are to live their lives by these teachings and bring others to know God. When people come they are to be baptised in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, in the name of the Trinity. So today think about how your actions, words and attitudes can teach others about God.

Discussion Points

- Why do you suppose the disciples doubted Jesus when they saw him?
- What were some of the horrific events that had recently happened to Jesus?
- How do you think the disciples felt when they saw Jesus alive?
- What did Jesus tell the disciples to do?
- Why was it important for the disciples to baptise and teach?
- How does the Church still follow these instructions today?
- Why would it have been comforting for the disciples to hear that Jesus was with them always?
- How can this message comfort us today, particularly at this time of emergency?

Questions taken from "Exploring the Sunday Lectionary: a Teenagers guide to the readings cycle A" by Sandy Rigsby and Steve Mason.

Activities

Ascension day bubbles

You will need: A plastic bottle or glass jar, water, vegetable oil, food colouring, alka seltzer tablets

Fill a bottle or jar halfway full with water and mix in some food colouring.

Now fill the rest of the bottle with oil, leaving a small space at the top.

The oil will separate from the water into a separate layer.

Drop an Alka Seltzer tablet (or try a quarter or half at a time if they are large tablets) into the bottle and watch as bubbles of coloured water start to ascend into the oil layer in the style of a mini lava lamp!

Talk: Watch the bubbles rising and think about the sight of Jesus ascending and what that might have meant for the disciples. What might they have been thinking/ feeling? What does it feel like to wait for something, as the disciples had been told to go and wait for the Holy Spirit to come?

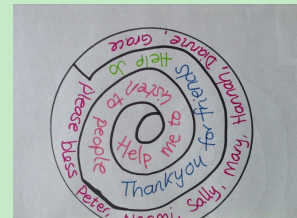
Pray: Think about situations where you or people you know are waiting for something to happen.

As you drop the tablet into the liquid and see bubbles ascending, pray that God will take the worries and stresses of waiting away and that they will feel God's presence with them as they wait.

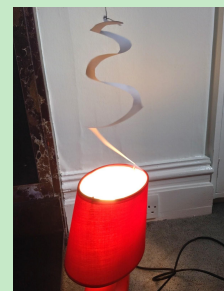
Ascension Spiral

You will need: Paper, pens and something round

Talk about Jesus' ascension in the gospel passage. Even though he has ascended to heaven and we can not see him, he is still with us, hears us and helps us.



Draw around something round and then draw a spiral inside it. Think about things you would like to pray about - for help, thanks, blessings for others etc and write or draw them inside the spiral.



Cut the spiral out and thread a piece of string through the top so that you can hold the thread and the spiral will dangle down. The spiral will spin slightly just by virtue of being held, but when held over a bulb or source of heat, the spiral will spin much more because of the rising of hot air. Even though we can't see the hot air, it is still there, rising up. The movement of the spiral gives a 'rising' or 'ascending' visual for the written or drawn prayers and a reminder that, even though we can't see him, Jesus is always with us.

Taken from: <http://flamecreativekids.blogspot.com>

What can you do for others?

- Make cards for your neighbours.
- Make a cake for someone.

Prayers

Lord, since you have ascended into heaven, we know we are the people sent to be your messengers. Help us to show your compassion and love to others. We make all our prayers through Christ our Lord.

Taken from: <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hitchin>

Reading the Gospel from this Sunday's Mass

A reading from the Gospel according to Gospel John 17:1-11

Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said:

'Father, the hour has come:
glorify your Son
so that your Son may glorify you;
and, through the power over all mankind that you have given him,
let him give eternal life to all those you have entrusted to him.
And eternal life is this:
to know you,
the only true God,
and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.
I have glorified you on earth
and finished the work that you gave me to do.
Now, Father, it is time for you to glorify me
with that glory I had with you
before ever the world was.
I have made your name known
to the men you took from the world to give me.
They were yours and you gave them to me,
and they have kept your word.
Now at last they know
that all you have given me comes indeed from you;
for I have given them the teaching you gave to me,
and they have truly accepted this, that I came from you,
and have believed that it was you who sent me.
I pray for them;
I am not praying for the world
but for those you have given me,
because they belong to you:
all I have is yours
and all you have is mine,
and in them I am glorified.
I am not in the world any longer,
but they are in the world,
and I am coming to you.'

Some ways to tell the story to younger children:

A short cartoon to explore John 17: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bsUCJDRNHt0>

Reflection

Jesus prays for those he is sending out on the mission to help bring his message to others. This reminds us that we too need to pray. Jesus prays for us; we too need to make our prayers about others. It's also about bringing us together to show love and care for each other. Not just to those we know but to people around the world by the actions we do.

Discussion Points

- When you pray do you pray for yourself or for others?
- Why do you think prayer is important to the mission that Jesus gives us?
- How can we show love and care to others?
- How can we show God's love to those we will never meet?

Activities

Coin prayer

You will need: a coin

Throw a coin in the air. How does it land?

Heads: Say a thank you prayer...

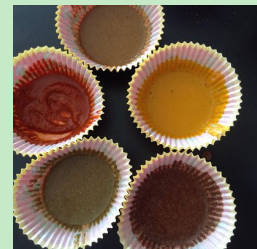
Tails: Say a prayer for someone else...



Sensory spice painting prayers

You will need: Spices (suggestions: Paprika, cinnamon, ginger, cumin and turmeric), water, 5 containers or cupcake cases and paintbrushes

Put about a tablespoon full of spice into each container. Mix some water into the spice to make a paste. Gradually add water until you get a paintable consistency.



Ask children to paint their prayers for people and places or to say thank you to God in words and pictures. Be ready for some wonderful spicy smells to rise up as they pray!

Taken from: <http://flamecreativekids.blogspot.com>

What can you do for others?

- Share your spice paintings with loved ones.
- Smile at everyone you see today.

Prayers

God of love, help us to be like Jesus, and make a real difference to the lives of our global family. Amen.

Taken from: <https://parish.rcdow.org.uk/hitchin>

God, you are mighty, through your might you show your compassion, and you know our fears and troubles. Today we pray for all who struggle, whose lives have become small and dulled by anxiety, and who feel they are without hope and beyond help. Strengthen the work of The Children's Society as they seek out and serve those whose mental health is suffering, all who don't see an end to the journey, and those who can't see any light in their darkness. Help those who share your compassion, and take your hope into hopeless situations, that all may see your strength, and cast all their burdens on to you, for God, you are mighty. Amen.

Taken from: <https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-you-can-do/your-church/pray-worship-reflect/pray/prayers-week>

An Act of Spiritual Communion

Introduction

You might find it helpful to have a space as a focus for their prayer. This might include a crucifix, icon or other holy image, and a lighted candle.

Sign of the Cross: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Examen: Before listening to the Word of God take a moment to reflect.

For what am I grateful to God for today?

Where did I stray from God: through words, actions or things I did not do.

How might I do better tomorrow?

What grace do I ask from God in order to live more closely in his love?

You may wish to conclude by saying: Lord Jesus, you have revealed yourself as the way to the Father: Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. You have poured out on your people the Spirit of truth: Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. You are the Good Shepherd, leading us to eternal life: Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

The Word of God: The readings for the Mass of the Day can be found in a People's Missal or online Universalis [<https://universalis.com/mass.htm>]. Either read all the texts or choose just to read the Gospel of the Day. Or use the gospel reading that is on this sheet.

Silent reflection: Pause for a moment of silent reflection.

Prayers & Intercessions:

Pray for family and loved ones so that they may be held in God's compassionate care.

Pray for other countries who are struggling with the effects of the COVID 19 virus. If the following intentions are said in a family or other group you may wish to conclude each one with the response: Lord, in your mercy. Hear our prayer

For those in authority: may they offer advice with care and integrity, may they seek to protect the poor and vulnerable.

For all who work in healthcare: give strength to all who look after the sick so that they may bring comfort and relief to the suffering.

For the Church: may she offer prayers and consolation for all those affected.

For our local community and all for those in need: may those who are isolated know the support and service of their neighbours.

Lord's Prayer: Our Father...

Spiritual Communion: Prayer of St Alphonsus

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in this Holy Sacrament of the altar. I love you above all things and I passionately desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my soul so that I may unite myself wholly to you now and forever. Amen.

Conclusion: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Additional Prayers

Pope Francis' prayer to the Virgin for protection

O Mary, you shine continuously on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope. We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick. At the foot of the Cross you participated in Jesus' pain, with steadfast faith. Your, Salvation of the Roman People, know what we need. We are certain that you will provide, so that, as you did at Cana of Galilee, joy and feasting might return after this moment of trial. Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform ourselves to the Father's will and to do what Jesus tells us: He who took our sufferings upon Himself, and bore our sorrows to bring us, through the Cross, to the joy of the Resurrection. Amen. We seek refuge under your protection, O Holy Mother of God. Do not despise our pleas — we who are put to the test — and deliver us from every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin.

Prayer for the Household

Hear us, Lord, and send your angel from heaven to visit and protect, to comfort and defend all who live in this house. Amen

Taken from "When Mass cannot be celebrated publicly"
<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2020/03/No-Mass-A4.pdf>

Blessed Nicholas Postgate, Pray For Us

